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Municipality of Pictou County

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October 7, 2020

Honourable Stephen McNeil, Premier
Province of Nova Scotia
PO Box 726
Halifax, NS
B3J 2T3

Dear Premier McNeil:

As Nova Scotians navigate their way through COVID-19 we are all striving for the flexibility and adaptability we need to maintain some semblance of normalcy. This has been particularly difficult for non-profits and community-based organizations who struggle at the best of times to attract volunteers, fundraise, and operate at a break-even point. Community rinks fall in the latter category and they are the subject of this correspondence.

At the time the Pandemic was defined in the spring, rinks were basically at the end of their operating season and saw very little negative financial impact. With fall upon us they are valiantly trying to cope to balance the expense of COVID protocols, a decrease in the number of larger user groups, and a reluctance by the public to put themselves at risk in these environments. From a purely business perspective there is a real risk that rinks will not be viable for the 2020/21 season and a worry that users will not return to rinks in the numbers the facilities are accustomed to and designed to serve. My own Municipal Council believes that this is not a situation unique to Pictou County and we are urging Government to consider the plight of community rinks and provide some measure of financial relief that will see them through the current season.

Enclosed you will find a copy of a resolution passed by Municipal Council earlier this week which captures the essence of our request. We urge Government to look favorable on a program that will support rink operations during this tenuous period.

Yours truly,

Brian Cullen
Chief Administrative Officer

/cm
p.c. NS Municipalities

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS Community Rinks are a vital part of the recreational infrastructure in small towns and rural areas; and

WHEREAS Community Rinks provide opportunities for walking tracks, recreational skating, figure skating and hockey at all levels; and

WHEREAS Community Rinks often run on a very tight budget with much volunteer donated labour; and

WHEREAS if Community Rinks close, they may never reopen; and

WHEREAS the restrictions placed by the Public Health Authorities to help control the spread of COVID -19 are significantly impacting the business operations of community rinks causing deficits.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Municipal Council for the Municipality of the County of Pictou call upon the government of the Province of Nova Scotia to bring forward a program of support to help Community Rinks survive the 2020-2021 season.

DATED at Caribou, NS this 5th day of October, 2020.